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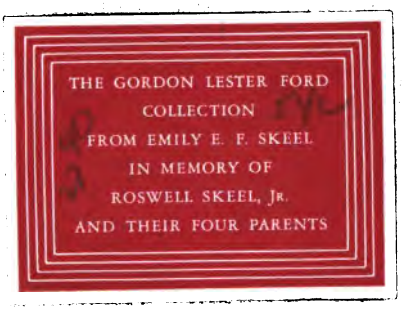
THE GORDON LESTER FORD
COLLECTION
FROM EMILY E. F. SKEEL
IN MEMORY OF
ROSWELL SKEEL, JR.
AND THEIR FOUR PARENTS

William Kent Jr
C. E. L.
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THE

WOOING

OF

MASTER FOX

BY

SIR EDWARD BULWER LYTTON, BART.

ARRANGED FOR CHILDREN BY O. D. MARTIN.

Illustrated by White.

PHILADELPHIA
ASHMEAD & EVANS
No. 724 Chestnut Street
1866

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Dedication.

TO CHARLES THOMAS JENKS.

My Dear Nephew:

I HAVE told you many stories, and you have listened with attention, and I believe you have enjoyed them all. Young as you are, I have always found you desirous of obtaining knowledge, and I have known you to stay for an hour from your velocipede, or your pet Maltese kitten, that you might commit to memory the words of a pretty song. You acquire readily; for in two days you made a complete mastery of the alphabet, and in two weeks you could read words of two or three syllables. I do not praise you to make you vain; I do it that you may be encouraged. I sincerely trust that you may have a long life before you, and that you may make it one of usefulness. As yet, you are only at the foundation of knowledge; study hard that you may reach its highest and most desirable point. Never be content with knowing as much as your friends; be not satisfied until you eclipse them all in know-

ledge. A thoroughly educated man is happier far than he who has wealth merely; for wealth is apt to take to itself wings and fly away; whereas, knowledge is a continual source of pleasure. For your amusement, as well as instruction, I have printed a beautiful book. It was mostly written by Bulwer, whom some have called the ablest literary gentleman of the nineteenth century. It is to be found in his exquisite romance of the Pilgrims of the Rhine. In the original story the moral is not as plainly shown as I think it should be for persons of your years, and I have therefore taken the liberty of making some additions to the text.

I trust the additions or explanations will serve their intended purpose. And so, farewell, my dear little nephew. Remember, that great knowledge cannot be obtained without great application. If, a few years hence, you study with the same earnestness and relish that you now evince at all your plays, I have no doubt you will grow to be a wise man; and that you may become both a wise and good man is the sincere wish of your affectionate uncle,

O. D. MARTIN.

Philadelphia, October 1, 1865.

THE WOOING OF MASTER FOX.

OME, Charley, come, my bright little nephew, Uncle Dick is ready now to tell you a story. Draw your chair close to me; place your fat, chubby hands upon my knee, and look up into my face with your happy, dancing eyes, and I will begin.

"Once upon a time there was no particular enmity between the various animals; indeed, they were quite friendly towards each other; the dog and the rabbit chatted very agreeably together, and the wolf was very kind to the lamb, and often invited her to take tea with him and be sociable. In these happy days, two most respectable cats, of a very old family, had an only daughter. Never was kitten more amiable, or more charming. In a little while she became noted as the greatest beauty in the neighborhood; in fact, everybody said she was the perfection of a cat. Her skin was of the most delicate tortoise-shell, and her paws were smoother than velvet; her whiskers were twelve inches long at least, and her

eyes had a gentleness altogether astonishing in a cat. But if the young beauty had suitors in plenty during the lifetime of her father and mother, you may suppose that she had many more lovers when, at the age of two and a half years, she was left an orphan, and sole heiress to all the family property. Bruin, the bear, had offered her his hand and was refused, and Gauntgrim, the wolf, had been equally unsuccessful; for Bruin was always in the sulks, and Gauntgrim always in a passion. Now, there was a good, honest, faithful dog living in the neighborhood, and he was in love with the cat. I don't know what the fine fellow's name was, but perhaps it was Tray. If he had any fault, it was that he had too good an opinion of himself; but many little children, and even men and women have that. So the dog said to himself, 'I am young and good looking; fond of play and amusement, and altogether as good a husband as the cat could find in a summer's day.' He was not a mean dog. He did not want to marry the cat because she was rich, but because he loved her dearly. So the dog threw his tail over his back and set off to see his ladylove.

"Now, a sly, cunning, tricky fox lived near our honest friend, the dog. The name of the fox was Reynard. As soon as Reynard saw that the dog was on his way to visit the cat, he set up so loud a laugh, that he nearly cracked his sides. 'Ho, ho, my fine fellow!' he cried; 'not so fast, if you please; you've got a fox for a rival, and you'll find him a pretty smart one.' Reynard was aware that in love one should always, if possible, be the first in the field, and he therefore resolved to arrive at the cat's residence before the dog. But this was no easy matter; for, though the fox could run faster

than the dog for a little way, he was no match for him in a journey of some distance; so the sly creature concluded to play him a trick which would detain him on the road. So the fox trotted pretty fast by a short cut in the woods, and, getting before the dog, laid down by a hole in the earth, and began to howl most piteously.

"In a short time the dog came along, and hearing the noise, was very much alarmed. 'See, now,' said he, 'if the poor fox has not got himself into some scrape! Those cunning creatures are always in mischief. How glad I am it never comes into my head to be cunning!' And the good-natured animal ran as hard as he could to see what was the matter with the fox.

"Never let pass an opportunity for doing good, my dear Charley, and the pleasure that you will feel after having done a good action will always be a sufficient reward for the trouble you have taken. But, as I told you, the fox had a trick to play on the dog, and it was now all a trick that he was playing.

"'What can I do for you, my friend?' asked the kind, warm-hearted dog. 'What trouble are you in?'

"'Oh, dear,' cried Reynard, 'what shall I do; what shall I do? My poor little sister has fallen into this hole, and I can't get her out; she'll certainly be smothered to death.' And the fox burst out a howling more piteously than ever.

"'But, my dear Reynard,' said the dog, very simply, 'why don't you go in the hole after your sister?'

"'Ah, you may well ask that,' said the fox; 'but, in trying to get in I have sprained my back, and can't stir. Oh, dear! what shall I do if my poor sister is smothered?'

"'Pray, don't vex yourself,' said the kind dog; 'I'll get her out in an instant;' and with that he forced himself into the hole.

"Now, this was just what the bad fox wanted him to do; and no sooner was the dog fairly in, than Reynard rolled a great stone to the mouth of the hole, and it fitted so tightly that the dog, not being able to turn around and scratch against it with his fore-paws, was made a close prisoner.

"'Ha, ha!' cried the fox, laughing outside, 'amuse yourself with my poor little sister, while I go and make your compliments to mademoiselle, the cat.' With that, Reynard set off at an easy pace, never troubling his head what became of the poor dog. When he arrived in the neighborhood of the beautiful cat's mansion, he resolved to pay a visit to a friend of his, an old magpie, that lived in a tree, and was well acquainted with all the news of the place. 'For,' thought Reynard, 'I may as well know the weak side of my wife that is to be, and get round it at once.' Now, the magpie was a great gossip; that is, she told all she heard, and never kept a secret. The cunning fox knew this, so he told her nothing but what he wanted her to tell again.

"'I will tell you a great secret,' said the fox; 'but be sure it don't go farther—'

"'On the word of a magpie,' interrupted the bird.

"'Pardon me for doubting you,' continued the fox; 'I should have recollected that a magpie was a proverb for discretion. But, as I was saying, you know her majesty, the lioness?'

"'Indeed I do,' said the magpie.

"'Well,' said the fox, 'she was pleased to fall in love with

me, and the lion grew so jealous I thought it prudent to run away. A jealous lion is no joke, let me assure your ladyship. But, mum's the word.'

"All this was great news to the magpie, and she told the fox all the scandal about Bruin, the bear, and Gauntgrim, the wolf; and she then fell to work on the poor cat. The fox soon discovered, from what the magpie told him, that the cat was very fond of flattery, and that she had considerable imagination. When the magpie had finished, she said, 'It must be very unfortunate for you to be banished from so magnificent a court as that of the lion.'

"'As to that,' said the fox, 'I console myself with a famous present he made me on parting, namely, three hairs from the fifth leg of the a-mor-on-thol-o-gos-phor-us. Only think of that, madam.'

"'The what?' cried the magpie, cocking down her left ear.

"'The amoronthologosphorus.'

"'La!' said the magpie; 'and what is that very long word, my dear Reynard?'

"'The amoronthologosphorus is a beast that lives on the other side of the river Cylinx; it has five legs, and on the fifth leg there are three hairs, and whoever has those three hairs can be young and beautiful for ever.'

"'How I would like to see them,' said the magpie, holding out her paw.

"'I can only show them to the lady I marry,' said the fox; 'in fact, they are intended for a marriage present. But you'll be sure not to mention the matter?'

"Now, the fox was really anxious for her to circulate his stories about the neighborhood, and she was only too glad of

the opportunity. The fox then wished the magpie good-night, and retired to a hole to sleep off the fatigues of the day, and to dream of the beautiful and rich heiress, the cat.

"Next morning, dear knows how, it was all over the place that Reynard, the fox, had been banished from the court of the lion, for the favor shown him by her majesty; and that the lion had bribed his departure with three hairs that would make any lady whom the fox married, young and beautiful forever. My dear little Charley must know that the magpie had told all that she had promised not to tell, and in this way she pleased the cunning fox much more than she thought. The cat was the first to hear the news, and she became all curiosity to see so interesting a stranger, possessed of 'qualifications' which, in the language of the day, 'would render any animal happy!' She was not long in obtaining her wish. As she was taking a walk in the wood, the fox contrived to encounter her. You may be sure that he made her his best bow; and he flattered the poor cat with so courtly an air, that she saw nothing surprising in the love of the lioness. Meanwhile, let us see what became of his rival, the dog.

"When the dog found that he was thus entrapped, he gave himself up for lost. In vain he kicked with his hind-legs against the stone; he only succeeded in bruising his paws; and at length he was forced to lie down, with his tongue out of his mouth, and quite exhausted. 'However,' said he, after he had taken breath, 'It won't do to be starved here without doing my best to escape; and if I can't get out one way, let me see if there is not a hole at the other end.' Thus saying, his courage, which stood him in lieu of cunning, returned, and he proceeded on in the same straightforward way in which he

always conducted himself. At first the path was exceedingly narrow, and he hurt his sides very much against the rough stones that projected from the earth. But, by degrees the way became broader, and he now went on with considerable ease to himself, till he arrived in a large cavern, where he saw an immense griffin sitting on his tail, and smoking a huge pipe.

"The dog was by no means pleased at meeting so suddenly a creature that had only to open his mouth to swallow him up at a morsel; however, he put a bold face on, and walking respectfully up to the griffin, said, 'Sir, I should be very much obliged to you if you would inform me the way out of these holes into the upper world.'

"The griffin took the pipe out of his mouth, and looked at the dog very sternly.

"'Ho, wretch!' said he, 'how comest thou hither? I suppose thou wantest to steal my treasure: but I know how to treat such vagabonds as you, and I shall certainly eat you up.'

"'You can do that if you choose,' said the dog; 'but it would be very unhandsome conduct in an animal so much bigger than myself. For my own part, I never attack any dog that is not of equal size: I should be ashamed of myself if I did. As to your treasure, the character I bear for honesty is too well known to merit such a suspicion.'

"'Upon my word,' said the griffin, who could not help smiling for the life of him, 'you have a singularly free mode of expressing yourself; and how, I say, came you hither?'

"Then the dog, who did not know what a lie was, told the griffin his whole history; how he had set off to pay his court

to the cat, and how Reynard, the fox, had entrapped him into the hole.

"When he had finished, the griffin said to him, 'I see, my friend, that you know how to speak the truth; I am in want of just such a servant as you will make me, therefore, stay with me, and keep watch over my treasure when I sleep.'

"'Two words to that,' said the dog. 'You have hurt my feelings very much by suspecting my honesty, and I would much sooner go back into the woods and be avenged on that scoundrel, the fox, than serve a master who has so ill an opinion of me. I pray you, therefore, to dismiss me, and to put me in the right way to my cousin, the cat.'

"'I am not a griffin of many words,' answered the master of the cavern, 'and I give you your choice — be my servant, or be my breakfast; it is just the same to me. I give you time to decide till I have smoked out my pipe.'

"The poor dog did not take so long to consider. 'It is true,' thought he, 'that it is a great misfortune to live in a cave with a griffin of so unpleasant a countenance; but, probably, if I serve him well and faithfully, he'll take pity on me some day, and let me go back to earth, and prove to my cousin what a rogue the fox is; and as to the rest, though I would sell my life as dear as I could, it is impossible to fight a griffin with a mouth of so monstrous a size.' In short, he decided to stay with the griffin.

"'Shake a paw on it,' said the grim smoker; and the dog shook the griffin's paw.

"'And now,' said the griffin, 'I will tell you what you are to do — look here;' and, moving his tail, he showed the dog a great heap of gold and silver, in a hole in the ground, that he

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had covered with the folds of his tail; and, also, what the dog thought more valuable, a great heap of bones of very tempting appearance.

"'Now,' said the griffin, 'during the day, I can take very good care of these myself; but at night it is very necessary that I should go to sleep: so, when I sleep, you must watch over them instead of me.'

"'Very well,' said the dog. 'As to the gold and silver, I have no objection; but I would much rather you would lock up the bones, for I am often hungry of a night, and—'

"'Hold your tongue,' said the griffin.

"'But, sir,' said the dog, after a short silence, 'surely nobody ever comes into so retired a situation! Who are the thieves, if I may make bold to ask?'

"'Know,' answered the griffin, 'that there are a great many serpents in this neighborhood; they are always trying to steal my treasure; and if they catch me napping, they, not contented with theft, would do their best to sting me to death. So that I am almost worn out for want of sleep.'

"'Ah!' said the dog, who was fond of a good night's rest, 'I don't envy you your treasure, sir.'

"At night, the griffin, who had a great deal of penetration, and saw that he might depend on the dog, laid down to sleep in another corner of the cave; and the dog, shaking himself well, so as to be quite awake, took watch over the treasure. His mouth watered exceedingly at the bones, and he could not help smelling them now and then; but he said to himself, 'A bargain's a bargain; and since I have promised to serve the griffin, I must serve him as an honest dog ought to serve.'

"In the middle of the night he saw a great snake creeping

in by the side of the cave, but the dog set up so loud a bark that the griffin awoke, and the snake crept away as fast as he could. Then the griffin was very much pleased, and he gave the dog one of the bones to amuse himself with; and every night the dog watched the treasure, and acquitted himself so well, that not a snake, at last, dared to make its appearance; so the griffin enjoyed an excellent night's rest.

"The dog now found himself much more comfortable than he expected. The griffin regularly gave him one of the bones for supper; and, pleased with his fidelity, made himself as agreeable a master as a griffin could do. Still, however, the dog was secretly very anxious to return to earth; for, having nothing to do during the day but to doze on the ground, he dreamed perpetually of the charms of his cousin, the cat; and, in fancy, he gave the rascal, Reynard, as hearty a worry as a fox may well have the honor of receiving from a dog's paws. He awoke panting; alas! he could not realize his dreams.

"One night, as he was watching as usual over the treasure, he was greatly surprised to see a beautiful little black and white dog enter the cave; and it came fawning to our honest friend, wagging its tail with pleasure.

"'Ah! little one,' said our dog, whom, to distinguish, I will call the watch-dog, 'you had better make the best of your way back again. See, there is a great griffin asleep in the other corner of the cave, and if he wakes, he will either eat you up or make you his servant, as he has made me.'

"'I know what you would tell me,' said the little dog; 'and I have come down here to deliver you. The stone is now gone from the mouth of the cave, and you have nothing to do but to go back with me. Come, brother, come.'

"The dog was very much excited by this address. 'Don't ask me, my dear little friend,' said he; 'you must be aware that I should be too happy to escape out of this cold cave, and roll on the soft turf once more; but, if I leave my master, the griffin, those wicked serpents, who are always on the watch, will come in and steal his treasure; nay, perhaps, sting him to death.' Then the little dog came up to the watch-dog, and remonstrated with him greatly, and licked him caressingly on both sides of his face; and, taking him by the ear, endeavored to draw him from the treasure; but the dog would not stir a step, though his heart sorely pressed him. At length the little dog, finding it all in vain, said, 'Well, then, if I must leave, good-by; but I have become so hungry in coming down all this way after you, that I wish you would give me one of those bones; they smell very pleasantly, and one out of so many could never be missed.'

"'Alas!' said the watch-dog, with tears in his eyes, 'how unlucky I am to have eat up the bone my master gave me, otherwise you should have had it and welcome. But I can't give you one of these, because my master has made me promise to watch over them all, and I have given him my paw on it. I am sure a dog of your respectable appearance will say nothing further on the subject.'

"Then the little dog answered pettishly, 'Pooh, what nonsense you talk! surely a great griffin can't miss a little bone, fit for me;' and nestling his nose under the watch-dog, he tried forthwith to bring up one of the bones.

"On this the watch-dog grew angry, and, though with much reluctance, he seized the little dog by the nape of the neck and threw him off, but without hurting him. Suddenly the little

dog changed into a monstrous serpent, bigger even than the griffin himself, and the watch-dog barked with all his might. The griffin rose in a great hurry, and the serpent sprang upon him ere he was well awake. I wish you could have seen the battle between the griffin and the serpent, how they coiled and twisted, and bit, and darted their fiery tongues at each other. At length, the serpent got uppermost, and was about to plunge his tongue into that part of the griffin which is unprotected by his scales, when the dog, seizing him by the tail, bit him so sharply, that he could not help turning round to kill his new assailant, and the griffin, taking advantage of the opportunity, caught the serpent by the throat with both claws, and fairly strangled him. As soon as the griffin had recovered from the nervousness of the conflict, he heaped all manner of caresses on the dog for saving his life. The dog told him the whole story, and the griffin then explained, that the dead snake was the king of the serpents, who had the power to change himself into any shape he pleased. 'If he had tempted you,' said he, 'to leave the treasure but for one moment, or to have given him any part of it, ay, but a single bone, he would have crushed you in an instant, and stung me to death ere I could have waked; but none, no, not the most venomous thing in creation, has power to hurt the honest!'

"'That has always been my belief,' said the dog; 'and now, sir, you had better go to sleep again, and leave the rest to me.'

"'Nay,' answered the griffin, 'I have no longer need of a servant; for, now that the king of the serpents is dead, the rest will never molest me. It was only to satisfy his avarice that his subjects dared to brave the den of the griffin.'

"Upon hearing this the dog was exceedingly delighted; and

raising himself on his hind-paws, he begged the griffin most movingly to let him return to earth, to visit his lady-love, the cat, and worry his rival, the fox.

"'You do not serve an ungrateful master,' answered the griffin. 'You shall return, and I will teach you all the craft of our race, which is much craftier than the race of that pettifogger, the fox, so that you may be able to cope with your rival.'

"'Ah, excuse me,' said the dog hastily, 'I am equally obliged to you; but I fancy honesty is a match for cunning any day; and I think myself a great deal safer in being a dog of honor than if I knew all the tricks in the world.'

"'Well,' said the griffin, a little piqued at the dog's bluntness, 'do as you please; I wish you all possible success.'

"Then the griffin opened a secret door in the side of the cavern, and the dog saw a broad path that led at once into the wood. He thanked the griffin with all his heart, and ran, wagging his tail, into the open moonlight. 'Ah, ah! master fox,' said he, 'there's no trap for an honest dog that has not two doors to it, cunning as you think yourself.'

"With that he curled his tail gallantly over his left leg, and set off on a long trot to the cat's house. When he was within sight of it, he stopped to refresh himself by a pool of water, and who should be there but our friend, the magpie.

"'And what do *you* want, friend?' said she, rather disdainfully, for the dog looked in rather poor condition after his journey.

"'I am going to see my cousin, the cat,' said he.

"'*Your* cousin! your cousin, indeed,' said the magpie; 'don't you know she is going to be married to Reynard, the fox? This is not a time for her to receive the visits of a brute like you.'

"These words put the dog in such a passion, that he very nearly bit the magpie for her uncivil mode of communicating bad news. However, he curbed his temper, and, without answering her, went at once to the cat's residence. The cat was sitting at the window, and no sooner did the dog see her than he fairly lost his heart. Never had he seen so charming a cat before. He advanced, wagging his tail, and with the most insinuating air; when the cat, getting up, shut the window in his face, and, lo! Reynard, the fox, appeared in her stead.

"'Come out, you rascal!' said the dog, showing his handsome white teeth; 'come out and fight me; I have not forgotten your malice, and you see that I am no longer shut up in the cave, and unable to punish you for your wickedness.'

"'Go home, silly one!' said the fox, sneering; 'you have no business here; and as for fighting you — bah!' Then the fox disappeared from the window.

"But the dog, thoroughly enraged, scratched lustily at the door, and made such a noise, that presently the cat herself came to the window.

"'How now!' said she, angrily; 'what means all this rudeness? Who are you, and what do you want at my house?'

"'Oh, my dear cousin,' said the dog, 'do not speak so unkindly. Know that I am come here on purpose to pay you a visit; and, whatever you do, let me beseech you not to listen to that villain, Reynard; you have no idea what a rogue he is.'

"'What!' said the cat, blushing; 'do you dare to abuse your betters in this fashion? I see you have a design on me. Go, this instant, or —'

"'Enough, madam,' said the dog, proudly; 'you need not speak twice to me; farewell.' And he turned away very

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slowly, and went under a tree, where he took up his lodgings for the night. But the next morning there was an amazing commotion in the neighborhood; a stranger, of very different style of travelling from that of the dog, had arrived at the dead of night, and fixed his abode in a large cavern hollowed out of a steep rock. The noise he had made in flying through the air was so great, that it had awakened every bird and beast in the parish; and Reynard, whose bad conscience never suffered him to sleep very soundly, putting his head out of the window, perceived, to his great alarm, that the stranger was nothing less than a monstrous griffin. Now, griffins are the richest beasts in the world; and that's the reason they keep so close under ground. Whenever it does happen that they pay a visit above, it is not a thing to be easily forgotten.

"The magpie was all agitation. What could the rich griffin possibly want there? She resolved to take a peep at the cavern, and, accordingly, she hopped timorously up the rock, and pretended to be picking up sticks for her nest.

"'Holloa, ma'am!' cried a rough voice, and she saw the griffin putting his head out of the cavern. 'Holloa! you are the very lady I want to see; you know all the people about here, eh?'

"'I certainly know all the best company, your lordship,' answered the magpie, dropping a courtesy.

Upon this the griffin walked out, and smoking his pipe leisurely in the open air, in order to set the magpie at her ease, continued, 'Are there any respectable beasts of good families settled in in this neighborhood?'

"'Oh, most elegant society, I assure your lordship,' cried the magpie. 'I have lived here myself these ten years, and the great heiress, the cat, yonder, attracts a vast number of strangers.'

"'Humph! heiress, indeed! much *you* know about heiresses!' said the griffin. 'There is only one heiress in the world, and that's my daughter.'

"'Bless me! has your lordship a family? I beg you a thousand pardons. But I only saw your lordship's own carriage last night, and did not know you brought any one with you.'

"'My daughter went first, and was safely lodged before I arrived. She did not disturb you, I dare say, as much as I did, for she sails along like a swan; but I have the gout in my left claw, and that is the reason I puff and groan so in taking a journey.'

"'Shall I drop in upon Miss Griffin, and see how she is after her journey?' said the magpie, advancing.

"'I thank you, no. I don't intend her to be seen while I stay here; it unsettles her; and I am afraid of the young beasts running away with her, if they once hear how handsome she is; she is the living picture of me, but she's monstrous giddy! Not that I should care much if she should go off with a beast of degree, were I not obliged to pay her portion, which is prodigious; and I don't like parting with money, ma'am, when I've once got it. Ho, ho, ho!'

"'You are too witty, my lord. But if you refused your consent?' said the magpie, anxious to know the whole family history of so grand a seignior.

"'I should have to pay the whole dowry all the same. It was left her by her uncle, the dragon. But don't let this be known to anybody.'

"'Your lordship may depend on my secrecy. I wish your lordship a very good-morning.'

"Away flew the magpie, and she did not stop till she got to

the cat's house. The cat and the fox were at breakfast, and the fox had his paw on his heart.

"'Beautiful scene,' cried the magpie.

"The cat colored, and bade the magpie take a seat. Then off went the magpie's tongue, glib, glib, glib, chatter, chatter, chatter. She related to them the whole story of the griffin and his daughter, and a great deal more besides, that the griffin never told her. The cat listened attentively. Another young heiress in the neighborhood might be a formidable rival.

"'But is the griffiness handsome?' said she.

"'Handsome!' cried the magpie; 'oh, if you could have seen her father! such a mouth, such eyes, such a complexion; and he declares she's the living picture of himself! What do you say, my Reynard? you, who have been so much in the world, have, perhaps, seen the young lady.'

"'Why, I can't say I have,' answered the fox, waking from a reverie; 'but she must be wonderfully rich. I dare say that fool, the dog, will be making love to her.'

"'Ah! by the way,' said the magpie, 'what a fuss he made at your door yesterday; why would you not admit him, my dear?'

"'Oh!' said the cat, demurely, 'Mr. Reynard says that he is a dog of very bad character; quite a fortune-hunter, and hiding the most dangerous disposition to bite under an appearance of good nature. I hope he won't be quarrelsome with you, dear Reynard!'

"'With me? Oh, the poor wretch, no! He might bluster a little; but he knows if I'm once angry I am capital at biting; but one should not boast of himself.'

"The fox was a great coward, my dear Charley, but he did

not wish the magpie or cat to know it, and, as the dog was not there, he could pretend to be very brave.

"In the evening Reynard felt a strange desire to go and see the griffin smoking his pipe; but what could he do? There was the dog under the opposite tree, evidently watching for him, and Reynard had no wish to prove himself as brave as he declared he was. At last he resolved to have recourse to stratagem to get rid of the dog. A young buck of a rabbit, a sort of provincial fop, had looked in upon his cousin, the cat, to pay her his respects; and Reynard, taking him aside, said,

"'You see that shabby looking dog under the tree? He has behaved very ill to your cousin, the cat, and you certainly ought to challenge him. Forgive my boldness; nothing but my respect for your character induces me to take so great a liberty; you know I would chastise the rascal myself, but what a scandal it would make! If I were really married to your cousin, it would be a different thing. But you know what a story that mischief-making magpie would hatch out of it.'

The rabbit looked very foolish; he assured the fox that he was no match for the dog; that he was very fond of the cat, to be sure; but he saw no necessity to interfere with her domestic affairs; and, in short, he tried all he possibly could to get out of the scrape; but the fox so artfully played on his vanity; so earnestly assured him that the dog was the biggest coward in the world, and would make an humble apology; and so eloquently represented to him the glory he would obtain for manifesting so much spirit, that at length the rabbit was persuaded to go out and deliver the challenge.

"'I'll be your second,' said the fox; 'and the great field on the other side of the wood, two miles hence, shall be the place

of battle; there we shall be out of observation. You go first, I'll follow in half an hour; and I say — hark! in case he does accept the challenge, and you feel the least afraid, I'll be in the field, and take it off your paws with the utmost pleasure; rely on *me*, my dear sir!'

"Away went the rabbit. The dog was a little astonished at the boldness of the poor creature; but, on hearing that the fox was to be present, willingly consented to repair to the place of conflict. This readiness the rabbit did not at all relish. He went very slowly to the field, and seeing no fox there, his heart misgave him, and while the dog was putting his nose to the ground to see if he could track the coming of the fox, the rabbit slipped into a burrow, and left the dog to walk back to his tree again.

"Meanwhile the fox was already at the rock. He walked very soft-footedly, and looked about with extreme caution, for he had a vague notion that a griffin-papa would not be very civil to foxes. Now, there were two holes in the rock, one below, and one above — an upper story and an under — and while the fox was peering about, he saw a great claw from the upper rock beckoning to him. 'Ah, ah!' said the fox, 'that's the pretty young griffiness, I'll declare.' He approached, and a voice said: 'Charming Mr. Reynard, do you think you could deliver an unfortunate griffiness from a barbarous confinement in this rock?'

"'Oh, goodness!' cried the fox, tenderly, 'what a beautiful voice! and, ah, my poor heart, what a lovely claw! Is it possible that I hear the daughter of my lord, the great griffin.'

"'Hush, flatterer! not so loud, if you please. My father is taking a stroll, and is very quick of hearing. He has tied

me up by my poor wings in the cavern, for he is mightily afraid that some beast will run away with me. You know I have all my fortune settled on myself.'

"'Talk not of fortune,' said the fox; 'but how can I deliver you? Shall I enter and gnaw the cord?'

"'Alas!' answered the griffiness, 'it is an immense chain I am bound with. However, you may come in and talk more at your ease.'

"The fox peered cautiously all around, and seeing no sign of the griffin, he entered the lower cave and stole upstairs to the upper story; but, as he went on, he saw immense piles of jewels and gold, and all sorts of treasure; so that the old griffin might well have laughed at the poor cat being an heiress.

"The fox was greatly pleased at such indisputable signs of wealth, and he entered the upper cave, forgetting all about his ladylove, the cat, and resolved to be transported with the charms of the griffiness. There was, however, a great chasm between the landing-place and the spot where the young lady was chained, and he found it impossible to pass. The cavern was very dark, but he saw enough of the figure of the griffiness to perceive, in spite of her dress, that she was the image of her father, and the most hideous heiress in the world. However, he swallowed his disgust, and poured forth such a heap of compliments that the griffiness appeared entirely won. He implored her to fly with him the first moment she was unchained.

"'That is impossible,' said she; 'for my father never unchains me except in his presence, and then I cannot stir out of his sight.'

"'The wretch!' cried Reynard; 'what is to be done?'

"'Why, there is only one thing I know of,' answered the

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griffiness; 'which is this: I always make his soup for him, and if I could mix something in it that would put him fast asleep before he had time to chain me up again, I might slip down and carry off all the treasure below on my back.'

"'Charming!' exclaimed Reynard; 'what invention! what wit! I will go and get some poppies directly.'

"'Alas!' said the griffiness, 'poppies have no effect upon griffins. The only thing that can ever put my father fast asleep is a nice young cat boiled up in his soup; it is astonishing what a charm that has upon him! But where to get a cat?'

"The fox was a little startled at so singular an opiate. 'But,' thought he, 'griffins are not like the rest of the world, and so an heiress is not to be won by ordinary means. I do know a cat,' said he, after a short pause; 'but I would feel a little repugnance at the thought of having her boiled in your father's soup. Would not a dog do as well?'

"'Ah, base thing!' said the griffiness, pretending to weep, 'you are in love with the cat; I see it. Go and marry her, poor dwarf that she is, and leave me to die of grief.'

"In vain the fox protested that he did not care a straw for the cat; nothing could appease the griffiness but his positive assurance that, come what would, the poor puss should be brought to the cave and boiled for the griffin's soup.

"'But how will you get her here?' said the griffiness.

"'Ah, leave that to me,' said Reynard. 'Only put a basket out of the window, and draw it up by a cord; the moment it arrives at the window, be sure you clap your claw on the cat at once, for she is terribly active.'

"'Tush!' answered the heiress, 'a pretty griffiness I should be if I did not know how to catch a cat!'

"'But this must be when your father is out,' said Reynard.

"'Certainly; he takes a stroll every evening at sunset.'

"'Let it be to-morrow, then,' said Reynard, impatient for the treasure.

"This being arranged, the fox bade the griffiness good-bye, and returned home to the cat. When he entered her house, he saw how ordinary everything looked after the jewels in the griffin's cave, and he quite wondered how he had ever thought the cat had the least pretensions to good looks. However, he concealed his wicked design, and his ladylove thought he never appeared so amiable.

"'Only guess,' said he, 'where I have been? To our new neighbor, the griffin; a most charming person; thoroughly affable, and quite the air of the Court. As for that silly magpie, the griffin saw her character at once; and it was all a hoax about his daughter; he has no daughter at all. You know, my dear, hoaxing is a fashionable amusement among the great. He says he has heard of nothing but your beauty; and on my telling him we were going to be married, he insisted upon giving a great ball and supper in honor of the event. In fact, he is a gallant old fellow, and dying to see you. Of course, I was obliged to accept his invitation.'

"This, you know, my dear Charley, was all false; but bad foxes, as well as bad people, will say and do any thing to accomplish their purposes.

"'You could not do otherwise,' said the unsuspecting young creature, who, as I said before, was very susceptible to flattery.

"'And only think how delicate his attentions are,' said the fox. 'As he is very badly lodged for a beast of his rank, and his treasure takes up the whole of the ground-floor, he is forced

to give the party in the upper story; so he hangs out a basket for his guests, and draws them up with his own claw. How condescending! But the great are so amiable.'

"The cat, brought up in seclusion, was all delight at the idea of seeing such high life; and the lovers talked of nothing else all the next day; when Reynard, towards evening, putting his head out of the window, saw his old friend, the dog, lying under the tree, and watching him very grimly.

"'Ah, that miserable creature! I had quite forgotten him; what is to be done now? He would make short work of me if he once caught me out of doors.'

"With that, the fox began to consider how he should get rid of his rival, and at length he resolved on a plan; he desired the cat to set out first, and wait for him at the turn of the road, a little way off. 'For,' said he, 'if we go together, we shall be insulted by the dog; as he knows that, in the presence of a lady, the custom of a beast of my fashion will not suffer me to avenge the affront. But when I am alone, the creature is such a coward that he would not dare say his head is his own. Leave the door open, and I'll follow immediately.'

"The cat's mind was so completely poisoned against her cousin, the dog, that she implicitly believed this account of his character, and accordingly, with many recommendations to her lover not to sully his dignity by getting into any sort of quarrel with the dog, she set off first. The dog went up to her very humbly, and begged her to allow him to say a few words to her; but she received him so haughtily, that his spirit was up, and he walked back to the tree more than ever enraged against his rival. But what was his joy when he saw the cat had left the door open. 'Now, wretch,' thought he, 'you can-

not escape me!' So he walked briskly in at the back door. He was greatly surprised to see Reynard lying down in the straw, panting as if his heart would break, and rolling his eyes as in the pangs of death.

"'Ah, friend,' said the fox, with a faltering voice, 'you are avenged; my dying hour is come. I am just going to give up the ghost. Put your paw upon mine, and say you forgive me.'

"Despite his anger, the generous dog could not set his tooth on a dying foe. 'You have served me a shabby trick,' said he; 'you have left me to starve in a hole, and you have evidently injured my character with my cousin, the cat; certainly I meant to pay you back, but if you are really dying, that alters the affair.'

"'Oh, oh!' groaned the fox, bitterly; 'I am past help; the poor cat has gone for Doctor Ape, but he'll never come in time. What a thing it is to have a bad conscience on one's death-bed. But wait till the cat returns, and I'll do you full justice with her before I die.'

The good-natured dog was much moved at seeing his mortal enemy in such a state, and endeavored as well as he could to console him.

"'Oh, oh!' said the fox; 'I am so parched in the throat; I am burning;' and he let his tongue hang out of his mouth, and rolled his eyes more fearfully than ever.

"'Is there no water here?' said the dog, looking round.

"'Alas, no! yet, stay; yes, now I think of it, there is some in that little hole in the wall; but how to get at it; it is so high that I can't, in my poor weak state, climb up to it, and I dare not ask such a favor of one I have injured so much.'

"'Don't talk of it,' said the forgiving dog; 'but the hole is very small; I could not put my nose through it.'

"'No; but if you just climb up on that stone, and thrust your paw into the hole; you can dip it into the water, and so cool my poor parched mouth. Oh! what a thing it is to have a bad conscience.'

"The dog sprang upon the stone, and, getting on his hind legs, thrust his paw into the hole, when suddenly Reynard pulled a string that he had concealed under the straw, and the dog found his paw caught tight to the wall in a running noose.

"'Ah, rascal!' cried the dog, turning round; but the fox leaped up gaily from the straw, and fastening the string with his teeth to a nail in the wall, walked out, crying, 'Good-bye, my dear friend; have a care how you believe hereafter in sudden conversions.' So he left the dog on his hind legs to take care of the house. Reynard found the cat waiting for him at the appointed place, and they walked lovingly together till they came to the cave. It was now dark, and they saw the basket waiting below; the faithless fox assisted the poor cat into it. 'There is only room for one,' said he, 'and you must go first.' Up went the basket; the fox heard a piteous mew, and no more. 'So much for the griffin's soup,' thought he.

"He waited patiently for some time, when the griffiness, waving her claw from the window, said cheerfully, "All's right, my dear Reynard; my papa has finished his soup, and sleeps as sound as a rock. All the noise in the world would not waken him now till he has slept off the boiled cat, which won't be these twelve hours. Come and assist me in packing up the treasure. I should be sorry to leave a single diamond behind.'

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"'So should I,' said the fox. 'Stay, I'll come round by the lower hole; why the door is shut! Pray, beautiful griffiness, open it to your impatient adorer.'

"'Alas! my father has hidden the key. I never know where he places it. You must come up in the basket; see, I will lower it for you.' The fox was a little loth to trust himself in the same conveyance that had taken his ladylove to be boiled; but the most cautious grow rash when money is to be gained, and avarice can trap even a fox. So he put himself as comfortably into the basket as he could, and up he went in an instant. The basket rested, however, just before he reached the window, and the fox felt, with a shudder, the claw of the griffiness stroking his back.

"'Oh, what a beautiful coat,' quoth she, caressingly.

"'You are too kind,' said the fox; 'but you can feel it more at your leisure when I am once up. Make haste, I beseech you.'

"'Oh, what a beautiful bushy tail; never did I feel such a tail.'

"'It is entirely at your service, sweet griffiness,' said the fox; 'but, pray, let me in.'

"'No, never did I feel such a tail! No wonder you are so successful with the ladies.'

"'Ah, beloved griffiness, my tail is yours to eternity; but you pinch me a little too hard.' Scarcely had he said this, when down dropped the basket, but not with the fox in it; he found himself caught by the tail, and dangling half-way down the rock by the help of the very same kind of a pulley wherewith he had snared the dog. I leave you, my dear little Charley, to guess his consternation. He yelped out as loud as he could; for it hurts a fox exceedingly to be hanged by his tail with his head downwards,—when the door of the rock opened,

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and out stalked the griffin, smoking his pipe, with a vast crowd of all the fashionable beasts in the neighborhood.

"'Oho, brother,' said the bear, laughing fit to kill himself, 'who ever saw a fox hanged by the tail before?'

"'A pretty match, indeed; a griffiness for such a creature as you!' said the goat, strutting by him.

"The fox grinned with pain, and said nothing. But that which tried him most was the compassion of a dull fool of a donkey, who assured him with great gravity that he saw nothing at all to laugh at in his situation. 'At all events,' said the fox, 'cheated, gulled, and betrayed as I am, I have played the same trick on the dog. Go and laugh at him, gentlemen; he deserves it as much as I do, I assure you.'

"'Pardon me,' said the griffin, taking the pipe out of his mouth, 'one never laughs at the honest.'

"'And see,' said the bear, 'here he is.'

"And indeed the dog had, after much effort, gnawed the string in two, and extricated his paw; the scent of the fox had enabled him to track his footsteps, and he arrived burning for vengeance, and found himself already avenged. But his first thought was for his dear cousin, the cat, whom he loved so dearly. 'Ah!' cried he, movingly, 'where is she? That villain, Reynard, has doubtless played her some scurvy trick.'

"'I fear so, indeed, my old friend,' answered the griffin, 'but don't grieve; after all she was nothing particular. You shall marry my daughter, the griffiness, and succeed to all the treasure; aye, and all the bones that you once guarded so faithfully.'

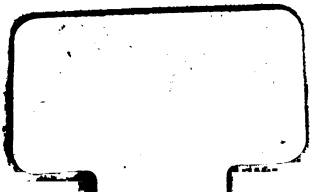
"'Talk not to me,' said the faithful dog. 'I want none of your treasure. I will go all over the world in search of my dear cousin.'

"'See her then,' said the griffin; and the beautiful cat, more beautiful than ever, rushed out of the cavern and threw herself into the dog's paws. A pleasant scene this for the fox. He had skill enough in the female heart to know it may excuse many little infidelities; but to be boiled alive for a griffin's soup! no, the offence was unpardonable.

"'You understand me, Mr. Reynard,' said the griffin, 'I have no daughter, and it was me you made love to. Knowing what sort of a creature a magpie is, I amused her with hoaxing her—the fashionable amusement of the Court, you know.'

"The fox made a mighty struggle, and leaped on the ground, leaving his tail behind him. It did not grow again in a hurry.

"'See,' said the griffin, as the beasts all laughed at the figure Reynard made in running into the wood, 'the dog beats the fox with the ladies after all; and cunning as he is in everything else, the fox is the last creature that should think of making love.'

"The fox's treachery and cunning were punished, and the faithfulness and honesty of the dog rewarded. The fox lost the treasure, his ladylove, and his tail; and the dog made many friends, and married the cat at last. They lived very happily together for years; indeed, ever since, the nuptial felicity of a dog and cat is proverbial. And this, my dear nephew, is the end of the Wooing of Master Fox."

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